Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Southeast European and Black Sea Studies

ISSN: 1468-3857 (Print) 1743-9639 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/fbss20

Pro-state paramilitary violence in Turkey since the 1990s

Ayhan Işık

To cite this article: Ayhan Işık (2021) Pro-state paramilitary violence in Turkey since the 1990s, Southeast European and Black Sea Studies, 21:2, 231-249, DOI: 10.1080/14683857.2021.1909285

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/14683857.2021.1909285

© 2021 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.

Published online: 31 Mar 2021.

Submit your article to this journal

Article views: 3811

View related articles

View Crossmark data

Citing articles: 6 View citing articles

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at
https://www.tandfonline.com/action/journalInformation?journalCode=fbss20

SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN AND BLACK SEA STUDIES
2021, VOL. 21, NO. 2, 231–249
https://doi.org/10.1080/14683857.2021.1909285

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS Check for updates

Pro-state paramilitary violence in Turkey since the 1990s

Ayhan Işık

Department of History-Political History, Utrecht University, Utrecht, The Netherlands

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the role of pro-state paramilitary groups in Turkey's Kurdish conflict from the 1990s to the present. The role of paramilitaries in civil wars has been heavily discussed in general but remains understudied in the context of Turkey's war with the PKK. Turkish state authorities established a number of paramilitary groups in the initial stage of the conflict. Their impact grew during the 1990s in line with the change in the state's war strategy to a low-intensity conflict (LIC). This article discusses the evolution of the role of pro-state paramilitary groups in Turkey's war with the PKK, focusing on their changing relationship with government agencies. It characterizes the first half of the 1990s as the paramilitarisation of the state and demonstrates the continuing impact of this into the 2000s. The data was collected from media resources, interviews, criminal prosecutions of national and local cases, and NGO reports. Overall, this article develops a better understanding of the nexus between paramilitarism and the state through the prism of Turkey's Kurdish conflict.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received date 18.1.21
Accepted date 23.3.21

KEYWORDS
Turkish paramilitaries; violence; kurds; pkk; conflict; enforced disappearances

Introduction

This article analyses the changing role of pro-state paramilitary groups in the war between the Turkish state and the Kurdistan Workers' Party (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan*, PKK) from the 1990s into the 2000s. In the early years of the war, starting from 1984, the Turkish state established and/or supported many semi-formal and informal armed units with paramilitary characteristics. Supported and operative at different levels (e.g. geographically, from the very local to the regional and national), these paramilitary groups were mostly used as auxiliary forces, assisting official security operations and gathering intelligence in conflict zones. However, the structure, intensity and targets of the military and state-backed paramilitary violence changed and became more intense from 1991 as the state war strategy transitioned into that of low-intensity conflict (LIC). This study discusses the internal and external reasons that pushed the Turkish state to change its military and political strategy in the war with the PKK during the early 1990s. It demonstrates how, in the new war strategy, the paramilitary groups were no longer just employed as auxiliary forces but became transformed into main actors of the war, on a par with the official state security forces.

CONTACT Ayhan Işık ayhnisik@gmail.com Department of History-Political History, Utrecht University, Drift 6, 3512 BS Utrecht, The Netherlands

This article has been corrected with minor changes. These changes do not impact the academic content of the article.

© 2021 The Author(s). Published by Informa UK Limited, trading as Taylor & Francis Group.
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives License (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/), which permits non-commercial re-use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, and is not altered, transformed, or built upon in any way.

The focus is placed mainly on four paramilitary groups: the Gendarmerie Intelligence and Counter-Terrorism Organization (*Jandarma İstihbarat ve Terörle Mücadele*, JİTEM), an informal death squad established in the late 1980s; the Village Guards (*Köy Koruculuğu*), a semi-formal[1] organization and the largest paramilitary group in Turkey, established on 28 March 1985; the Police Special Operations Unit, also known as the Special Police Team (*Özel Tim*), established in the mid-1980s as a semi-legal unit; and Hizbullah, which emerged in the early 1980s and sided with the Turkish state against the PKK, particularly in the first half of the 1990s. The first three of these were directly established by the state and associated with government agencies, with the fourth, Hizbullah, positioned as a type of subcontractor.[3]

The literature defines paramilitary groups through the following features. They are composed of former members of the army, police, and intelligence organizations (Warren 2000). They are informal and semi-official militias (Carey et al. 2013), engage in acts of collective violence and vary in size from just a few members to several thousand (Alvarez 2006). They have different characteristics, ranging between vigilantes and death squads (Kowalewski 1991; Campbell 2002), and they gain economic returns from their activities (Mazzei 2009; Hristov 2009; Üngör 2020).

Paramilitary groups – or formations – can thus be specified on the basis of several main criteria. They are state-supported, semi-formal and informal armed groups; they are hierarchically flexible, unlike the official security forces of the state; they are quite diverse, for example in terms of organizational structure and (political and economic) aims; and their status can be (legally) denied by state institutions. I argue here that there were also three, roughly parallel reasons for the establishment of paramilitary groups in Turkey. The first was the claim of national security, the second was the weakness of the state's irregular warfare capacity and the third was the plausible deniability they afforded that allowed state institutions to conceal state violence.

This article proceeds as follows. First, it looks at the rise of the LIC doctrine that allowed paramilitary groups to proliferate. Second, it examines how the LIC strategy functioned as both a political and military strategy and explores the role played by right-wing and extreme Turkish nationalist parties in the implementation of this strategy. Third, it analyses how this strategy transformed the nature of the paramilitary groups numerically and structurally. Finally, it demonstrates the types and functions of violence perpetrated by paramilitary groups. More generally, this piece offers a conceptualization of the period between 1991 and 1996 as a paramilitarisation of the state, at least in the Kurdish-dominated provinces. However, it also shows that the impact of the paramilitarisation was not limited to the 1990s, this having an ongoing impact in Northern Kurdistan (alternatively named 'the Kurdish region of Turkey', 'the South-east' and 'Turkish Kurdistan') as evidenced by the Turkey-PKK conflict in 2015 and its aftermath (Bozarslan 2018).

A variety of methods have been employed to gather sources. For published works giving overviews, news coverage and further details, I made a content analysis of newspapers with different ideological backgrounds in the 1990s, I conducted archival research and analysis of relevant court proceedings and parliament documents (especially reports) and I also made use of the reports by NGOs on the paramilitary forces and the conflict. For first-hand reports and witness accounts, I conducted in-depth interviews with relatives of victims, former soldiers, human rights activists and lawyers who were active in Kurdistan during the war.

The emergence of paramilitary groups in the Turkey-PKK conflict

There is a long history of the formation of paramilitary groups in Turkey going back to the Hamidian and Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) periods during the late Ottoman Empire (1890–1918). In the Turkish state tradition, the purpose of supporting organized groups that would employ violence, from brigands and criminal gangs to state-backed paramilitary groups, was to extend central control of territory and eliminate perceived internal threats. Such groups reappeared on the political scene with the rise of the PKK in 1978, which began its armed struggle against the Turkish state in 1984. Thus, in addition to the official security forces, the state formed and used pro-state armed groups with paramilitary characteristics as a response to the armed rebellion. Then, in the face of the guerrilla warfare the strategic response to restructure the Turkish army and employ the doctrine of LIC played a determining role in the establishment and reorganization and further development of paramilitary formations.

Turkish LIC strategy and paramilitarism

The origin of the LIC doctrine is debated in the literature. One narrative proposed has it as emerging in the 1970s and 1980s under the leadership of the US. Richard H. Shultz (1991), for example, has argued that 'low intensity combat' was an American National Security term first used during the late 1970s. Gail Reed (1986) describes Reagan's administration as using this strategy against the Soviet Union and 'communist expansion' in various struggles in the 'third world'. The term was first employed systematically in the US Army Field Manual 100–20, prepared in 1981, under the heading *Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict* (US Army 1990).

John M. Collins, a senior specialist in US national defence, and his colleagues distinguished between three categories of conflict intensity, according to the conflict-spectrum perspectives of the US military, thus:

> High (nuclear wars: global, regional, conventional war -major-); Mid (limited wars: nuclear, conventional and insurgency (phase III); and Low (a-violent conflicts: insurgency (phases I, II), counterinsurgency, coups d'état, transnational terrorism, anti/counterterrorism, narco conflict, conventional war (minor); b-nonviolent conflicts: political warfare, economic warfare, technological warfare, psychological warfare, peacekeeping (Collins et al. 1990, 5).

As seen in this definition, LIC has a much more complex and broader framework than other types of conflict. It is usually used to describe internal conflicts rather than wars between states and targets as a war strategy not only an armed enemy but also civilians. Driven by the US, LIC gradually became a key element in the suppression of oppositional movements in other NATO countries, including Turkey. Secret anti-communist organizations established by NATO-member states also illustrate the prevalence of this war strategy (Ganser 2005). Thus, Clark (1996) described the main purpose of the doctrine as having 'two sides', these being 'first, to support the sovereignty of a pro-Western state, and second, to destabilize a state affiliated with the Eastern Bloc or a neutral state'. Turkey, as a pro-Western, NATO member state, was supported in a number of ways (advice on irregular warfare techniques, weapons support, etc.) during its war with the PKK (Bilâ 2007, 43–48).

Discussions on the LIC doctrine began in Turkey in the late 1980s, among high-ranking military leaders, members of parliament and journalists, with the idea of building a 'territorial army'. As the PKK gained increasing control over swathes of the mountainous countryside, state forces organized for conventional warfare with the Soviet Union were increasingly marginalized and rendered impotent, unable to control the rural regions, distant from the populace in the urban centres and barracked within compounds by night. In response to this deteriorating situation, the National Security Council (*Milli Güvenlik Kurulu*, MGK) proposed a territorial militia force, and the government of the day began work on legislation to provide for its formation (Armağan 1988, 7; Yalçın 1988, 8).

The establishment of a special army was debated in various political and military institutions of the state in the early 1990s. High-ranking commanders – among them Cem Ersever, co-founder of JİTEM – advocated the formation of special armies of tens of thousands of people during these discussions. President Özal, shortly before he died in April 1993, wrote a secret letter to then Prime Minister Demirel in which he advised the adoption of a new path in the conflict with the PKK involving the establishment a special force of 40–50 thousand people (Jongerden 2007, 46). These discussions centred on the formation of a new army with alternative, local and mobile features – a 'territorial army', 'special army' or 'people's army' – to increase the limited capacity of the Turkish Armed Forces (*Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri*, TSK) for irregular warfare.

In the same period, state authorities also prepared a liquidation plan to be used against pro-PKK civilians in line with the doctrine of LIC. A report by a parliamentary research commission on military coups mentions a different, secret plan dubbed the Castle Plan (*Kale Planı*). According to this report, the Castle Plan was prepared by the General Commander of the Gendarmerie, Eşref Bitlis, and submitted to the government. It recommended establishing new paramilitary groups or using existing groups (including Hizbullah and Repentants [*İtirafçılar*, former members of the PKK]) for the elimination of a number of businessmen and deputies allegedly supporting the PKK (TBMM 2012, 98). Scholars have argued that the doctrine of LIC was first adopted by the Turkish state in 1991 but only fully implemented from 1993 (Jongerden 2007, 67; Massicard 2010, 53). The former Chief of the General Staff, Doğan Güreş, one of the founding actors in the development of the doctrine of LIC in Turkey, stated in 1991 that he had looked into various types of irregular warfare employed by different countries (UK, US and Spain) to use against the PKK (Kışlalı 1996, 222–223).

As well as establishing and supporting paramilitary groups, the new doctrine of war also gave them more power and a degree of autonomy. Generally, paramilitary activities increased, particularly between 1991 and 1996 (HRW 1995; Göç-Der 2001; Kurban et al. 2007; İHD 2009, 4–18; Göral et al. 2013). These activities included unsolved killings and enforced disappearances (mainly Kurdish civilians allegedly PKK supporter) and the burning of villages (employed as part of the new strategy to remove the territorial base of support for the guerrillas).

The implementation of this strategy and the transformation of the army into mobile and smaller groups increased the role of paramilitary groups in the war against the PKK. In fact, some units of the army themselves began to resemble paramilitary formations or paramilitarised groups in terms of their functions. In other words, both the distinction and differences between the actions of paramilitary groups and the actions of certain

units of the regular army diminished (Kundakçı 2004, 220; Jongerden 2010, 9–15). This transformation of regular army units was the result of strategic changes that we can characterize as the *paramilitarisation of state security institutions*.

The paramilitarisation process created an intertwined relationship between army troops and paramilitary formations. Thus, Human Rights Watch published a report in 1995 on weapons transfers and conflict in Kurdistan emphasizing human rights violations perpetrated by the Bolu and Kayseri Commando Brigades: 'Witnesses interviewed by Human Rights Watch said they were able to identify Bolu and Kayseri soldiers, and reported that they were involved in numerous violations of the laws of war, including village destructions, indiscriminate fire, and kidnapping civilians who were then forced into serving as porters during Army patrols' (HRW 1995). As a result, the new strategy substantially created favourable conditions for mutual relations and dependencies in a network of connections between and interconnections among paramilitary formations and regular army forces.

The expanded and increased usage by state authorities of new and existing paramilitary forces as a result of the restructuring widened the theatre of war to include urban areas and affected the political arena. Successive governments created the legal frameworks required to support the new strategy through various new 'anti-terror laws' (Bezci and Öztan 2016), and a politically hawkish period of war developed from 1993 (Beşe 2006, 120). It is necessary, then, to look into developments and changes in politics in order to understand the impact of paramilitarisation.

The influence of Turkish political parties

Turkey was generally governed by coalition governments in the 1990s. Although there was political instability, with frequent changes of governments made up by combinations of parties with different ideologies, all parties as partners in government during this particularly violent period acceded to the paramilitary violence in continuation of the conflict in the Northern Kurdistan. Two parties in particular, the Nationalist Movement Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP) and True Path Party (*Doğru Yol Partisi*, DYP) played an important role in the reorganization of paramilitary groups through the LIC doctrine. The Social Democratic Populist Party (*Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti*, SHP), the largest supporter of the DYP in the 1990s, also had a Kemalist background.[4]

The legal framework of the LIC doctrine was created by the ruling Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi*, ANAP) in the early 1990s. The Turkish Grand National Assembly adopted the 'Law on the Fight Against Terrorism' in April 1991 (*Resmi* Gazete 1991; Cumhuriyet 1991a). This law established the legal basis of the new strategy, adopting a broad definition of terrorism (KHRP 2008). Basic freedoms, including freedom of the press and expression, were severely restricted, and it became very difficult to prosecute members of the security forces with the new law (TİHV 1992; TİHV 1994; Yılmaz 2015, 122; Muller 1996, 179). The Motherland Party did not manage to hold on to power after the 1991 election, and a new government was formed from a DYP-SHP coalition.

The part played by political parties in the reorganization of paramilitary forces throughout the introduction of the LIC doctrine was important and varied. The MHP played a key role in recruiting members of the Special Police Team. This was composed mainly of veteran members of the nationalist *Ülkücü* movement, active since the 1970s.

In the autumn of 1993, the MHP proposed a law to Parliament to establish a special army to fight against the PKK (Pekmezci and Büyükyıldız 1999, 193; Milliyet Gazetesi 1993a). However, instead of creating a new special army, the government and the General Director of Security reorganized its existing Special Police Team, in cooperation with the MHP. A newspaper reported that anyone desiring to become its police officers (namely, members of the Team) should apply to the MHP (Yurteri 1994, 4). There were statements that the MHP listed the applicants' names in the party's branches and gave them to government institutions. This was an illogical situation because the MHP was not part of the government (*Özgür* Ülke 1994), but it may be that the MHP did send such lists to the government for recruitment. It was also reported that relations between the MHP, the army and the police were historically close and that there had been similar relations before the 1980 military coup. Regardless, it seems clear that MHP members or at least people with MHP links were employed as part of the Special Police Team, the primary paramilitary force in Kurdistan (Pekmezci and Büyükyıldız 1999, 194–97). As a result of these developments, special police units – launched in 1982, institutionalized in 1985 and numbering as many as 5000 members – went through a strategic transformation in 1993 (Çelik 1995, 87–93; Gökdemir 2001, 94).

A second aspect of the role of the political parties in introducing the LIC doctrine was that they legitimized paramilitary groups, drawing popular support in two main ways, by presenting paramilitary formations as legitimate forces through the media and by including the leaders of paramilitary groups in the political sphere during elections (especially Village Guard leaders). Tansu Çiller, the DYP leader and Prime Minister between 1993 and '96, became an important political figure in strengthening and legitimizing two of the paramilitary groups (the Special Operation Units and Village Guards). Çiller visited the training camp of the Special Operation Units in the autumn of 1993, stated that they played an important role in the struggle against 'terrorism' and that their numbers would be increased (Milliyet Gazetesi 1993b).

The DYP (in government) and the MHP (not in government) also aimed to control and legitimize the Village Guards, as on a par with the Special Operation Units. The MHP was unable to establish a special army, but it did take an active role in the reorganization of the Units. It also aimed to increase its influence on the Village Guards. Some pro-state Kurdish tribes that were active in (part of) the Village Guards joined this ultra-nationalist party in 1994 (Durukan 1994; Pekmezci and Büyükyıldız 1999, 202). Moreover, almost all the chiefs of the Village Guards who were also mayoral candidates opted to enter politics in 1994 through either these right-wing parties or the Islamic Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*) (Başlangıç 1994).[5]

The Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP), which was established after 2000, followed a similar politics to the parties of the 1990s in creating and using paramilitary groups (see below).

The transformation of paramilitary groups

Until 1990, it was presumed that the PKK would be defeated without undergoing a major change in the military's structure, with the support of paramilitary groups alongside gendarmerie forces. As indicated, however, the PKK grew rapidly, including in terms of its number of guerrillas and mass support among Kurdish people generally

(Güneş 2012, 102–11; Karayılan 2011, 190–95). According to Cem Ersever, at the beginning of the 1990s, the army faced a serious lack of capacity in its fight against the PKK guerrillas; this strategic and tactical insufficiency had to be changed (Yalçın , 47). As Jongerden (2007, 43) put it, Turkish army forces 'were rapidly losing control of an undeclared war'. The Turkish state thus changed its war strategy and responded to the rise of the PKK with a new concept of war, the LIC doctrine, as indicated (above). Application of the LIC in the military field involved the reorganization of paramilitary forces. As a result, the numbers of militants in the existing paramilitary forces increased substantially, became even more autonomous, and began to function predominantly as death squads.

In the first half of the 1990s, there were four paramilitary forces that were especially influential. Two of them, the Village Guards and the Special Action Police Units, were semi-formal paramilitary forces whose existence the government had accepted and whose numbers were more or less known. The numbers of the other two informal forces, JİTEM and Hizbullah, were not precisely known, however (and never have been). Nevertheless, it may be confidently stated that the most significant increase in paramilitary numbers was in the Village Guards.

The Village Guard system can be divided into two categories: temporary and voluntary. Temporary village guards receive licenced weapons and a monthly salary; in return, they had to participate in military operations. Voluntary village guards do not take any salary or payment (Özar et al. 2013, 10). The Village Guards were reorganized under the new concept of war and the number of temporary guards receiving salaries considerably increased, particularly in the first part of the 1990s. In 21 Kurdish provinces, they numbered 14,818 members in 1988, a number that had increased by 1995 to 62,186 (ibid., 56).

The Special Police Team, meanwhile, had been established in 1983 as a small unit under the General Directorate of Security. Since the early 1990s, this group also underwent numerical and institutional transformations. In this case, however, the institutional transformation was carried out secretly and never publicly announced (Beşe 2006, 118–119). According to the Susurluk Report (Savaş 1997), the total number of personnel trained in this unit was 8,443 (Savaş 1997, 6; Beşe 2006, 121). According to scholars, though, the number was over 20,000 (Bozarslan 2000, 21; Jongerden 2007, 70).

There is little information about the number of members of JİTEM and Hizbullah. However, Arif Doğan (2011, 25), one of the founders of the JİTEM, argues that together with informants, there were some 10,000 people in total involved in JİTEM. If this claim is true, a very large part of this number consisted of informants, as the number of members of JİTEM tasked as death squads probably did not exceed a few hundred, even in the early 1990s. There is also no clear information on the number of members of Hizbullah. However, as the prosecution of Hizbullah members accelerated between 1992 and 1999 – after they stopped actively fighting the PKK – more than 4,000 of its members were detained because of violent actions against Kurdish civilians and members of other Kurdish Islamist groups (Çakır 2011, 88; Kurt 2015, 61–71).

There were several reasons for the 'defection' of Hizbullah away from the conflict with the PKK. These included negotiations between the two groups to cease hostilities and Hizbullah turning to the Western provinces of Turkey for its locus of activities; also many

members of the Hizbullah were arrested during the police operations after 1995 (Çelik 2018; Bulut and Faraç 1999).

The transformation of the Special Warfare Department as part of the LIC doctrine in the early 1990s involved its change from a brigade to division and from a paramilitary group to a formal unit of the army. The number of their units also greatly increased, and the name was changed to Special Forces Command (Akay 2009, 121–122; Kılıç 2010, 289–292; Söyler 2015, 101).

Over time, the paramilitary forces grew stronger and become more independent of the local state military units. This autonomy did not mean they were operating outside of the military hierarchy, however; on the contrary, as they become stronger, their relations with high-ranking soldiers, bureaucrats and powerful politicians intensified (Balık 2011, 168–171). Moreover, the state's high-level military and administrative bureaucracy itself allowed room for a greater autonomy as it was in their interest for these groups and their political violence to remain hidden, thus deniable and diverting attention from their own legal responsibilities. One interviewee clearly indicated this autonomy through the following example:

> For example, a typical Siverek family event, the two families from our tribe are fighting because of the blood feud, and a fight breaks out because people have guns. My dad calls the gendarmerie and he says, 'You have to intervene; people are going to kill each other'. The commander says, 'Hang up the phone and I'll call Mr. Sedat, I need to call Mr Sedat' (Interview #22; Istanbul, 18 May 2017).

The person mentioned in the interview is Sedat Bucak, chief of the Bucak tribe in the district of Siverek, Urfa province. There were reported to be thousands of village guards under Bucak's command, and they were very active in the 1990s, involved in multiple atrocities and major violations of the human rights of civilians (Savaş 1997, 33–36; Bozarslan 1999, 12–15; Massicard 2010, 44–45). Bucak's tribe came to be regarded as a local and autonomous paramilitary power. This example shows how state authorities ignored certain local actions of the pro-state tribes. Since they were fighting against the PKK, the state allowed them to act illegally, which could include pursuit of their own illicit economic interests. The Bucak tribe in Siverek were thus able to control gun and drug smuggling in the wider area to gain economic power (Özar et al. 2013, 60; Kılıç 2009, 188). An increase in the numbers of group members and their control over smuggling in Kurdish provinces thus seems to be behind the Bucak's Village Guard transformation into autonomous units.

The Assembly's Susurluk Commission report also mentions the autonomy of paramilitary forces. According to this report, the PKK defectors and local actors employed by JİTEM caused many problems (related to organized crime, smuggling, murder, etc.). Not only local actors but also those working in intelligence were able to operate outside of the military hierarchy. For instance, JİTEM Major and Commander, Cem Ersever, was able to act quite independently even when serving under high-ranking officers (Savaş 1997, 14–16).

Hizbullah's situation in this respect was rather different. It was not directly in the military hierarchy. Rather, there seems to have been a subcontractor relationship, mostly with the state, based on a common enemy (Çelik 2016, 100–108). More specifically, Hizbullah was a group founded outside the military hierarchy of the state, but which for

a certain period collaborated with state institutions and implemented violence against the Kurds it claimed were PKK supporters.

Hamit Bozarslan analyses autonomous the armed forces that emerged as the main actors of war under the LIC doctrine, their 'military solution' and their economic relations as follows:

> In fact, one has to admit that the gangs were a price that Turkey had to pay for its inability to deal with the Kurdish question as a political issue. If the war, and particularly the 'Low Intensity Conflict' doctrine . . . weakened the PKK, they . . . also created the conditions for the emergence or reinforcement of the paramilitary gangs. The political options in the Kurdish issue . . . [were] eliminated, because, among other reasons, for many involved actors, the so-called 'military solution' meant financial benefits and a total independence from the central power (Bozarslan 1999, 17-18).

Bozarslan thus presents the existence of barely controlled paramilitary groups and gangs as a price that the Turkish state had to pay. However, this was a price knowingly paid as a strategic option. Therefore, when examining many internal conflicts and massacres from the late Ottoman Empire to the present day, one can say that the paramilitary politics of the state have a long history and tradition and that the establishment and usage of such groups is less a price paid than a planned politics. However, the LIC also created conditions in which non-state paramilitary groups emerged and were reinforced even the official institutions of the state paramilitarised.

Types of paramilitary violence

With the new concept of war, the functions of paramilitary forces changed, and the forms of unrestricted violence employed, especially against civilians, reached troubling dimensions (İHD 2014, 79–124, 130–227). Many paramilitary forces began to transform into death squads. Paramilitary groups created by the state to fight against the PKK in the 1980s had previously been used by security forces mainly to better understand the conflict areas and gather intelligence. After 1991, however, the number of unsolved political murders increased steadily, such that in 1995, the Grand National Assembly of Turkey set up a commission to look into what was going on. The numbers in the report are striking: 6 deaths in 1990, 24 in 1991, 316 in 1992, and 314 in 1993, with most of the civilians killed being pro-PKK Kurds (TMBB 1995, 161–65). The annual balance sheets prepared by the Human Rights Association also show a significant rise in unsolved murders and enforced disappearances in the early 1990s (İHD 2021).

Paramilitary formations comprised an important part of these various forms of extreme violence, including unsolved political murders, enforced disappearances and the forced evacuation of villages, and so on, with civilians being the primary target of this new strategy employing paramilitary violence. The hardened approach deriving from the state sense of insecurity when faced with the rising force of the PKK was illustrated by the National Security Policy Document (*Milli Güvenlik Siyaset Belgesi*), published in November 1992 and known as the 'Red Book'. This emphasizes the risk posed to the security of the Turkish state and the need to eliminate this internal threat, with a sense of urgency that can be taken in the context as implying 'by any means'. In this document, 'separatism' was identified as the main threat (Şarlak 2004, 290).

The proliferation of paramilitary groups was clearly aimed at promoting a level of violence that would frighten Kurdish civilians from allying with the PKK. The enforced disappearances were arguably the most extreme form of this political violence – both physical and symbolic – and occupy an important place in the memory of families of the disappeared and of the Kurdish people more generally, due especially to the absence of bodies and thus uncertainty of death, lack of knowledge of the circumstances of the ending and thus opportunity for ceremony (funerals) and emotional closure. According to the tentative list made by the Truth Justice Memory Centre (*Hakikat Adalet Hafıza Merkezi*), the total number of enforced disappearances came to 1353.

A dramatic rise in enforced disappearances can be seen clearly to follow the implementation of the LIC doctrine in 1993 (Figure 1). Most of the disappearances occurred in the Northern Kurdistan, though some also occurred in western provinces, especially Istanbul, where Kurds also lived in great numbers (significantly as a result of the LIC tactic of village evacuation leading to forced urban migration)Figure 2. Almost 95% of the disappearances were recorded between 1991 and 1999 (Göral et al. 2013, 25). It should be noted that these figures are uncertain, however, as the conflict remains unresolved and the government has created no research commission.

(Source: Göral et al. 2013, 24).

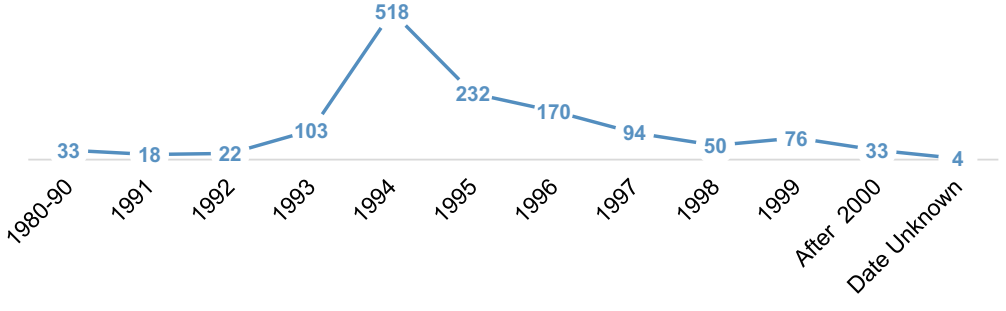

Figure 1. Numbers of the disappeared by year.

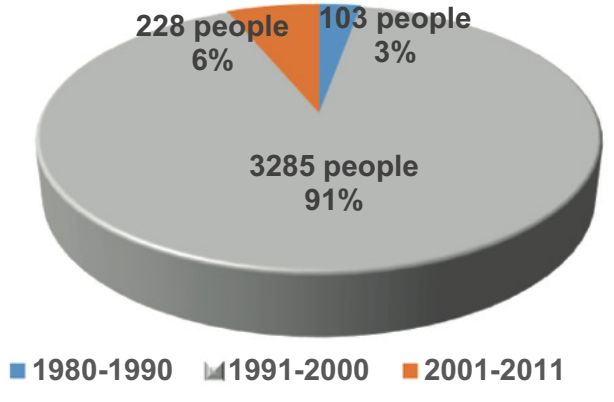

Figure 2. The numbers of unsolved political murders and extrajudicial executions by year.

The enforced disappearances illustrated the dramatic consequences of showing support for the PKK and spread terror among people. Shortly before they were disappeared, people were usually taken into custody, which occurred both in homes and in public, in highly visible spaces (Alpkaya 1995, 47). The victims would be taken into custody either by formal security forces or by paramilitary groups (İHD 2014, 79–124; Işık 2014, 49). The main suspects in these events – in the eyes of the families and local communities, at least – were the paramilitary formations -JİTEM, the Special Operations Team and Village Guards- (Işık 2020).

The commission established by the Turkish Assembly to investigate unsolved political murders in 1995 after the extraordinary increase in political killings in the first half of the 1990s suggested that village guards, repentants and JİTEM members were involved in many illegal actions, and hence recommended that the Ministry of Justice carry out full investigations. According to the commission's report, 908 unsolved political murders had been committed by mid-decade (TMBB 1995, 159, 16). The Human Rights Association (*İnsan Hakları Derneği*, İHD) reported that 1964 political killings were committed between 1989 and 1999, 80% of which were in Kurdish provinces (Öndül 2000). A total of 3566 unsolved political killings were committed between 1980 and 2011 according to the same institution (İHD 2014, 130–220).

(Source: İHD 2014, 130–227).[2]

According to the Human Rights Association report, the state had had to make use of a number of special units due to its great difficulty in fighting against the PKK (including the Bolu and Kayseri Commando Brigades and Special Forces Command, along with JİTEM and the Special Operations Teams). These were directed against civilians in the cause of the 'struggle against terrorism' (İHD 2014, 127–129). Most of the murdered civilians were active in public life, being politicians, journalists, NGO members and students (Yılmaz 2015, 306–326). According to the reports of the Human Rights Foundation of Turkey (*Türkiye İnsan Hakları Vakfı*, TİHV), the number of unsolved political murders in 1991 was 152, which increased to 467 in 1993 (TİHV 1992b, 52, 1994, 149–58).

The murder of Vedat Aydın is usually taken as a starting point for unsolved political killings in the 1990s (ANF News 2017). Aydın was the head of the Diyarbakır branch of the pro-Kurdish People's Labour Party (*Halkın Emek Partisi*, HEP). According to Abdulkadir Aygan, a repentant member of JİTEM, he was taken and killed on 5 July 1991, by a JİTEM group (Balık 2011, 52–53). A few days after the detention, Aydın's dead body was found, with signs of torture, in a rural area of the Elazığ province (Cumhuriyet 1991b). Leaving the corpse of a person who had been taken into custody in the countryside was one of the methods most frequently employed by the security forces to cover the acts of paramilitary forces (Yılmaz 2015, 306–307). It was a common belief in Kurdish provinces that if a death squad like JİTEM detained someone it was highly likely that they would disappear, presumed killed.

Some of these crimes were committed by Hizbullah. Unsolved killings allegedly committed by Hizbullah began mainly in 1991 and continued until 2000 (Diyarbakır High Court 2000a, 2000b). Figures from the Hizbullah case documents support the İHD numbers in showing that the Islamic-directed violence against civilians was also distinctly high in the 1990s compared to the periods before and after. Ümit Özdağ, an academic and former member of the Good Party (İYİ Parti), also prepared a report on

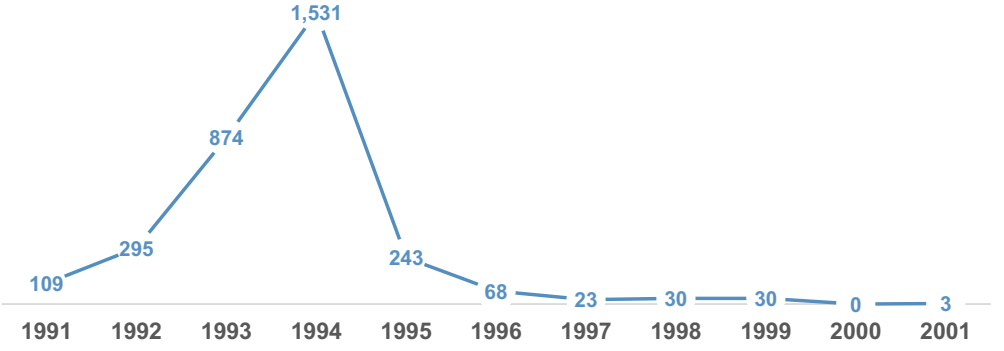

Figure 3. Evacuated and destroyed villages in Northern Kurdistan, 1991–2001.

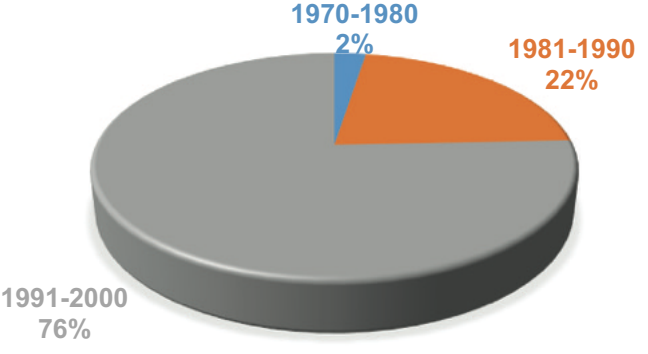

Figure 4. Migration from Kurdish settlements by decade.

unsolved murders. According to this report, which covers twenty years (from 1984 to 2004), 840 unsolved murders were committed, a figure much lower than that the NGO reports. However, even this again shows a dramatic increase in unsolved murders after 1991 (Özdağ 2013).

As stated, the evacuation of villages was an integral part of the state's paramilitary policy. State authorities gave civilians in the countryside of Kurdistan two options: either become village guards or migrate (Özar et al. 2013, 43). These options amounted (or were made to amount) to a choice between loyalty and hostility to the state. According to a 1993 human rights report, 3500 villages and hamlets were evacuated and approximately three million people forced to emigrate (TİHV 1994, 181). Overwhelmingly, this was done during the 1990s (Figure 3, 4). Other studies on the evacuation and forced migration of Kurdish villages give different figures on the number of displaced people (from 300,000 to 3 million) (Kurban et al. 2007; Göç-Der 2001; Türkiye Göç ve Yerinden Olmuş Nüfus Araştırması 2006; TBMM 1998). According to research by the Migrants' Association for Social Solidarity and Culture (*Göç Edenler Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Kültür Derneği*), over four fifths of the migrants were from rural settlements (villages and hamlets) (Göç-Der 2001, 9–12).

(Sources: Jongerden 2010, 3–4; Yıldız 2002, 22–39).

(Source: Göç-Der 2001, 9–12).

Jongerden (2010) also relates the evacuation of the villages to the LIC doctrine: 'The objective of the new doctrine was the destruction of the PKK environment, both by contraction (resettlement of the population) and penetration.' The authorities were using paramilitarised army units (the Bolu and Kayseri special commando brigades), and targeting civilians to control rural areas where war was active (HRW 1995).

The legacy of paramilitarisation in the 2000s

The influence of paramilitary groups continued in the Kurdish conflict but gradually decreased in the early 2000s. This stemmed from three developments: First, the Susurluk accident that in November 1996 revealed the dark and complex relations between members of the paramilitary groups, bureaucrats, politicians and mafia groups. Thus, the paramilitary groups could not used as much as in the second half of the 1990s. A large section of society reacted strongly to the evidence of state crimes. The second was the capture of PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan by the Turkish state in 1999, following which a ceasefire was declared. This dramatically reduced the conflict and the concomitant need for and thus use of paramilitary groups. Thirdly, the Justice and Development Party came to power in 2002, raising issues such as EU accession negotiations and debates on democracy, which reduced the space for the activities of paramilitary groups like the JİTEM death squads. Intermittent (secret) negotiations took place between the PKK and the state between 2005 and 2015, which also led to a peace process. However, the war restarted in from 2015, once again reinvigorating the use of paramilitary groups in Northern Kurdistan.

When negotiations between state actors and PKK representatives were terminated in 2015, a new alliance was formed with the partnership of the AKP government led by the then Prime Minister and later President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, on the one hand, and former elites of the state, on the other, comprising extreme nationalist and pro-Kemalist groups and represented in Parliament by the MHP, with which AKP was forced into an informal partnership by relatively poor electoral results. This signalled a nationalist turn by Erdoğan looking to instrumentalize the 'Kurdish issue' to maintain his grip on power.

After the failure of the peace talks in 2015 and '16, began intense conflicts between the Turkish army and paramilitary forces, and youth groups of the Kurdish movement, The Civil Protection Units (Kurdish: Yekîneyên Parastina Sivîl, YPS) in different Kurdish towns and cities. During the attacks, paramilitary groups deployed together with the official army and police forces killed thousands of civilians in a form of urban warfare. As a result of these attacks, there was a massive and intended destruction in many neighbourhoods and even cities (UNHCHR 2017; Ercan 2019). There were allegations that paramilitary groups were used during these operations with high capacity, as legal military units, in fact. There were reports that the irregular forces deployed included mercenaries who spoke Arabic and had probably gained experience in the Syrian civil war (TİHV 2016).

Mention of a new, hard-line group, *Esedullah* (Lion of Allah) recalls the JİTEM death squads in the 1990s, which had roots in the radical Islamic tradition. According to the local press, during the urban operations many members of these groups, who were over fifty years of age, chanted 'Allahu Ekber!' (Allah is the Greatest!) (Yıldıral 2015). It would seem

that these groups were hired especially for their experience in urban conflicts (HDP 2016). They did not act separately from the official armed troops of the state, but, on the contrary, took part alongside them in the urban destruction. There were also allegations that a defence and consulting company called SADAT (SADAT International Defence Consulting Construction Industry and Trade Inc., *Uluslararası Savunma Danışmanlık İnşaat Sanayi ve Ticaret*) was behind the Esedullah paramilitary groups active in the city wars of 2015. It is also argued that Turkey had trained and organized mercenary groups in Syria and in Libya in recent years through this group (Antonopoulos 2017; Eşiyok 2019).

The technical capacities of the paramilitary groups appear to have greatly increased in the 2000s compared to the 1990s, and, in a climate of particularly authoritarian rule, their actions were not denied by state agencies like in the 1990s (Bozarslan 2000). Interestingly, it can be argued that paramilitary groups participating in the 2015–16 conflicts used jihadists and foreign paramilitaries just as JİTEM had used repentant in the 1990s. In the recent period, moreover, the paramilitaries were legalized as the Gendarmerie Special Operations (*Jandarma Özel Harekat*, JÖH) and Police Special Action (*Polis Özel Harekat*, PÖH). As a result, the legal and hierarchical networks between official armed forces and paramilitary groups became once again and if anything more intertwined in the 2010s.

Conclusion

Paramilitary forces were created and existing groups with paramilitary characteristics were activated by state agencies in the initial stage of the conflict between the PKK and the Turkish state. The state-linked paramilitaries mainly supported gendarmerie forces during this period. The transformation of the war strategy into the LIC supported by nationalist political parties paved the ground for their proliferation and a rise in political violence.

Through this strategy, which primarily targeted civilians and was used intensively between 1991 and 1996, the bureaucratic and military institutions of the state became themselves radicalized in terms of their capacity to act outside the law and international human rights. Thence, this period can be characterized as the paramilitarisation of state institutions. Then, as state authorities determined the new strategy, they began to explore ways to separate civilians and PKK guerrillas. Accordingly, the realization of the new strategy meant an attempted severance of the PKK's connection with Kurdish populations in both rural areas and urban centres. At the same time as rural villages were burned and evacuated, public figures in the cities were killed and disappeared.

Although the influence of paramilitary groups began to decrease in parallel with the suspension of war in the early 2000s, they were used again in urban wars that flared up in 2015–16. Considering that there are allegations that the state has recently sent these paramilitaries and mercenaries to the Syrian and Libyan civil wars, it can be said that it has begun to export its paramilitary policy.

Notes

1. This information has been compiled from the Human Rights Association report, but the actual number is estimated to be higher.

2. Although village guards and special police teams were formed under statute (Turkish law), they can be characterized as semi-formal for three main reasons. First, the recruitment of their members was not transparent (special police team members were often chosen from among members of ultranationalist parties, while the recruitment of village guards was determined either by force or by pro-government tribes and families. Second, these two groups did not serve full-time like the state's official security forces – army, police and gendarmerie – for instance, many of the village guards continued their work as farmers or artisans. Third, both village guards and special police teams were in a hierarchically ambiguous position, working with many different groups, from regular army forces to dedicated death squads.
3. The concept of subcontractor is used here to express how the partnership was utilized by both parties (Hizbullah and the state) in an (implicit) agreement based on a common enemy (the PKK).
4. Mete Tunçay (2021) defines Kemalism thus: 'The ideas and principles of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder and first president of the Turkish Republic, are termed Kemalism; Kemalism constitutes the official ideology of the state, and endured publicly unchallenged until the 1980s.' This nationalist ideology, which does not tolerate different identities outside the secular Turkish, is still very effective in Turkey.
5. Two examples of these relationships: between 1991 and 1999, Sedat Bucak was elected as a deputy from the province of Şanlıurfa for the DYP and was the leader Bucak tribe, well-known for its involvement in the Village Guard system; Kamil Atağ, leader of the Tayan tribe, was elected mayor in Cizre in the local elections in 1994 representing the Welfare Party.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Notes on contributor

Ayhan Işık works at Utrecht University as a researcher. He received his PhD on Turkish paramilitarism in the 1990s of Turkey from the Department of History/Political History at Utrecht University. He finished undergraduate and master's degrees at the Department of History at Istanbul Bilgi University. His master's thesis was about Kurdish and Armenian relations in the Ottoman Kurdish press (1898-1914). He is a co-founder and an editorial board member of the journal *Toplum ve Kuram* (Theory and Society: Kurdish Studies) and co-author of the book *The Unspoken Truth: Enforced Disappearances*, research of the Truth Justice Memory Center.

References

Akay, H. 2009. "Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri: Kurumsal ve Askeri Boyut". In *Güvenlik Sektörü ve Demokratik Gözetim: Almanak Türkiye 2006-2008*, ed. A. İnsel and A. Bayramoğlu, 117–71. Istanbul: TESEV Yayınları.

Alpkaya, G. 1995. "Kayıp'lar Sorunu Ve Türkiye". *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 50, no. 3: 31–63.

Alvarez, A. 2006. "Militias and Genocide". *War Crimes, Genocide, & Crimes Against Humanity* 2: 1–33.

ANF News. 2017. "The First Bullet: Murder of Vedat Aydın". 10 July. https://anfenglish.com/news/the-first-bullet-murder-of-vedat-aydin-20886

Antonopoulos, P. 2017. "Turkey's Interests in the Syrian War: From Neo-Ottomanism to Counterinsurgency". *Global Affairs* 3, no. 4–5: 405–19. doi:10.1080/23340460.2018.1455061.

Armağan, H., 1988. "Ordu Kontrolünde Yerel Savunma". *Milliyet Gazetesi*, 31 October.

Army, U.S. 1990. *Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict*. Washington, D.C.

Balık, U. 2011. *Kerberos: PKK'dan JİTEM'e Bir Tetikçinin Anatomisi*. 1st ed. Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları.
Başlangıç, C., 1994. "Korucular Aday Oldu". *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*, 3 July.
Bulut, F. and M. Faraç. 1999. Kod Adı Hizbullah: Türkiye Hizbullahı'nın Anatomisi. 2. bs. Istanbul: Ozan Yayıncılık
Beşe, E. 2006. "Office of Special Operations". In *Almanac Turkey 2005: Security Sector and Semocratic Oversight*, ed. Ü. Cizre, 118–27. Istanbul: Istanbul: TESEV Publications.
Bezci, E.B., and G.G. Öztan. 2016. "Anatomy of the Turkish Emergency State: A Continuous Reflection of Turkish Raison d'état between 1980 and 2002". *Middle East Critique* 25, no. 2: 163–79. doi:10.1080/19436149.2016.1148858.
Bilâ, F. 2007. *Komutanlar Cephesi*. Istanbul: Detay Yayıncılık.
Bozarslan, H. 1999. *Network-Building, Ethnicity and Violence in Turkey*. Abu Dhabi ECSSR.
Bozarslan, H. 2000. "Why the Armed Struggle Understanding the Violence in Kurdistan of Turkey". In *The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey: Obstacles and Chances for Peace and Democracy*, ed. F. Ibrahim and G. Gürbey, 17–30. Munster: LIT Verlag.
Bozarslan, H., 2018. "The Turkey of the 2010's: Conflict, Pluralism, and Spaces of Life in a Modern Anti-Democracy". Keynote lecture presented at the Societal Conflict and Cohabitation in Turkey and Beyond, CEST Conference 2018, Stockholm University, Stockholm, 29 November.
Çakır, R. 2011. *Derin Hizbullah: İslamcı Şiddetin Geleceği*. Istanbul: Metis Yayınları.
Campbell, B.B. 2002. "Death Squads: Definition, Problems and Historical Context". In *Death Squads in Global Perspective: Murder with Deniability*, ed. A.D. Brenner and B.B. Campbell, 1–26. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
Carey, S.C.N.J., Mitchell, W. Lowe, and N.J. Mitchell. 2013. "States, the Security Sector, and the Monopoly of Violence: A New Database on Pro-Government Militias". *Journal of Peace Research* 50, no. 2: 249–58. doi:10.1177/0022343312464881.
Çelik, S. 1995. *Türk Kontr-Gerillası*. 2nd ed. Cologne: Ülkem Presse.
Çelik, A. 2016. "Kürdistan Yerellerinde 90'ların Savaş Konfigürasyonu: Baskı, Şiddet ve Direniş". In *İsyan, Şiddet, Yas 90'lar Türkiye'sine Bakmak*, ed. A. Uysal, 71–113. Ankara: Dipnot Yayınları.
Clark, R. 1996. "İnsan Hakları ve 'Low Intensity Conflict". In *Düşük Yoğunluklu Çatışma: İlân Edilmemiş Savaş*, ed. J. Hippler, 43–45. Istanbul: Belge Yayınları.
Collins, J.M., F. Hamerman, and J.P. Seevers. 1990. *U.S. Low-Intensity Conflicts 1899-1990*. Washington D.C.: Committee On Armed Services House of Representatives.
Cumhuriyet. 1991a. "Teröre Yeni Tanım. *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*", 13 April.
Cumhuriyet. 1991b. "HEP İl Başkanı'nın Kuşkulu Ölümü". 1991. 5 July.
Çelik, A. 2018. 'Temps Et Espaces De La Violence Interne: Revisiter Les Conflits Kurdes En Turquie À L'échelle Locale (Du Xixe Siècle À La Guerre Des Années 1990).' PhD Dissertation, de l'École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS)
Diyarbakır High Court. 2000a. "Esas Hakkında Mütalaa-Hizbullah Terör Örgütü. Diyarbakır: Diyarbakır 6". Ağır Ceza Mahkemesi.
Diyarbakır High Court. 2000b. "Gerekçeli Karar-Hizbullah Davası. Diyarbakır: Diyarbakır 6". Ağır Ceza Mahkemesi.
Doğan, A. 2011. JİTEM'i Ben Kurdum. 1. baskı. Cağaloğlu, Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları
Durukan, N., 1994. "MHP'li Aşiretler DYP'ye Transfer". *Milliyet Gazetesi*, 10 November.
Ercan, H. 2019. "Is Hope More Precious than Victory? The Failed Peace Process and Urban Warfare in the Kurdish Region of Turkey". *South Atlantic Quarterly* 118, no. 1: 111–27. doi:10.1215/00382876-7281636.
Eşiyok, D. 2019. "Ütopyası 'İslam Konfederal Devleti' Olan Sadat, Hep Libya'daydı". *Ahval*. 29December.http://ahval.co/tr-69526
Ganser, D. 2005. *NATO's Secret Armies: Operation GLADIO and Terrorism in Western Europe*. Routledge.
Gazete, R. 1991. "Terörle Mücadele Kanunu. *T.C*". *Cumhurbaskanligi Resmi Gazete*. http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/
Göç-Der. 2001. *Göç-Der Zorunlu Göç Raporu*. Istanbul: Göç Der.

Gökdemir, O. 2001. "Pike: Bir Polis Şefinin Kısa Tarihi". In *Chiviyazilari/Kamera*. Vol. 106:25. Istanbul:Chiviyazilari.
Göral, Ö.S., A. Işık, and Ö. Kaya. 2013. *The Unspoken Truth: Enforced Disappearances*. Istanbul: Truth Justice Memory Center.
Güneş, C. 2012. *The Kurdish National Movement in Turkey: From Protest to Resistance*. New York: Routledge.
HDP. 2016. "Sur Raporu". Halkların Demokratik Partisi. https://www.hdp.org.tr/tr/raporlar/hdp-raporlari/sur-raporu/8729
Hristov, J. 2009. Blood and Capital: The Paramilitarization of Colombia. 1st ed. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press
HRW. 1995. "Weapons Transfers and Violations of the Laws of War in Turkey". Human Rights Watch. https://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/1995/Turkey.html
HUNEE. 2006. *Türkiye Göç ve Yerinden Olmuş Nüfus Araştırması*. Ankara: Hacettepe Üniversitesi Nüfus Etütleri Enstitüsü.
İHD. 2009. "Ocak 1990 – Mart 2009 Döneminde Köy Korucuları Tarafından Gerçekleştirilen İnsan Hakları İhlallerine İlişkin Özel Rapor". İnsan Hakları Derneği. http://www.ihd.org.tr/images/pdf/ocak_1990_mart_2009_koy_koruculari_ozel_raporu.pdf
İHD. 2014. "Zorla Kaybedilenler, Faili Meçhul Cinayet-Yargısız İnfazlar, Toplu Mezarlar Raporu. İnsan Hakları Derneği [Human Rights Association]". Diyarbakır: İnsan Hakları Derneği.
İHD. 2021. "Bilançolar-İnsan Hakları Derneği [Summary, Human Rights Association]". http://www.ihd.org.tr
Işık, A. 2014. "1990'larda Devletin 'Sivil Siyaseti' Olarak Zorla Kaybetmeler". *Toplum Ve Kuram* 9: 43–52.
Işık, A. 2020. "The Emergence, Transformation and Functions of Paramilitary Groups in Northern Kurdistan (Eastern Turkey) in the 1990s". PhD Dissertation, Utrecht: Utrecht University.
Jongerden, J. 2007. *The Settlement Issue in Turkey and the Kurds: An Analysis of Spatial Policies, Modernity and War*. Leiden: Brill.
Jongerden, J. 2010. "Village Evacuation and Reconstruction in Kurdistan (1993-2002)". *Études rurales* 186, no. March: 1–22 (77–100).
Karayılan, M. 2011. *Bir Savaşın Anatomisi Kürdistan'da Askeri Çizgi*. Neuss: Mezopotamya Yayınları.
KHRP. 2008. "Turkey's Anti-Terror Laws: Threatening the Protection of Human Rights". Kurdish Human Rights Project, Briefing Paper. London.
Kılıç, E. 2009. *JİTEM: Türkiye'nin Faili Meçhul Tarihi*. 2nd ed. Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları.
Kılıç, E. 2010. *Özel Harp Dairesi*. Istanbul: Timaş Yayınları.
Kışlalı, M.A. 1996. *Güneydoğu: Düşük Yoğunluklu Çatışma*. Ankara: Ümit Yayıncılık.
Kowalewski, D. 1991. "Counterinsurgent Vigilantism and Public Response: A Philippine Case Study". *Sociological Perspectives* 34, no. 2: 127–44. doi:10.2307/1388987.
Kundakçı, H. 2004. *Güneydoğu'da Unutulmayanlar*. 4th ed. Istanbul: Alfa Yayıncılık.
Kurban, D., D. Yükseker, A.B. Çelik, T. Ünalan, and A.T. Aker. 2007. *Coming to Terms with Forced Migration: Post-Displacement Restitution of Citizenship Rights in Turkey*. Istanbul: Tesev Yayınları. http://tesev.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Coming_To_Terms_With_Forced_Migration_Post-Displacement_Restitution_Of_Citizenship_Rights_In_Turkey.pdf
Kurt, M. 2015. *Din, Şiddet ve Aidiyet: Türkiye'deHizbullah*. Istanbul: İletişim Yayıncılık.
Massicard, E. 2010. "Gangs in Uniform in Turkey: Politics at the Articulation between Security Institutions and the Criminal World". In *Organized Crime and States: The Hidden Face of Politics*, ed. J.-L. Briquet and G. Favarel-Garrigues, 41–71. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
Mazzei, J. 2009. Death Squads or Self-Defense Forces: How Paramilitary Groups Emerge and Challenge Democracy in Latin America? University of North Carolina Press
Milliyet Gazetesi. 1993a. "PKK'yı 1 Yılda Kazırız". 8 August.
Milliyet Gazetesi. 1993b. "Çiller'den Özel Time Övgü". 7 November.
Muller, M. 1996. "Nationalism and the Rule of Law in Turkey: The Elimination of Kurdish Representation During the 1990s". In *The Kurdish Nationalist Movement in the 1990s: Its*

Impact on Turkey and the Middle East, ed. R.W. Olson, 173–99. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
'Örneklerle Türkiye İnsan Hakları Raporu1991.'1992. Ankara: TİHV-Türkiye İnsan Hakları Vakfı.
Öndül, H., 2000. "Faili Meçhul Siyasal Cinayetler. İnsan Hakları Derneği", 24 January. http://www.ihd.org.tr/faili-mel-siyasal-cinayetler/
Özdağ, Ü., 2013. "Faili Meçhuller". Yüzyıl Türkiye Enstitüsü. https://stratejisite.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/faili-mehuller-tarihe-gre-sral-liste.pdf (last accessed February 2021).
Özar, Ş., N. Uçarlar, and O. Aytar. 2013. *From Past to Present a Paramilitary Organization in Turkey: Village Guard System*. Diyarbakır: Disa Yayınları. http://disa.org.tr/pdf_media/SONKORUCULUKKTAPNG.pdf
Pekmezci, N., and N. Büyükyıldız. 1999. *Ülkücüler Öteki Devletin Şehitleri*. Istanbul: Kaynak Yayınları.
Reed, G. 1986. "Low Intensity Conflict: A War for All Seasons". *The Black Scholar* 17, no. 1: 14–22. doi:10.1080/00064246.1986.11414382.
Şarlak, Z. 2004. "Atatürkçülükten Millî Güvenlik Rejimine: 1990'lar Türkiye'sine Bir Bakış". In *Bir Zümre, Bir Parti: Türkiye'de Ordu*, ed. A. İnsel and A. Bayramoğlu, 283–93. Istanbul: Birikim Yayınları.
Savaş, K., 1997. "*Susurluk Raporu*". https://tr.wikisource.org/wiki/Susurluk_Raporu_(Kutlu_Sava%C5%9F)
Shultz, R.H. 1991. "The Low-Intensity Conflict Environment of the 1990s". *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 517, no. 1: 120–34. doi:10.1177/0002716291517001009.
Söyler, M. 2015. *The Turkish Deep State: State Consolidation, Civil-Military Relations and Democracy*. London: Routledge.
TBMM. 1997. "TBMM Susurluk Komisyonu Raporu". https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/sirasayi/donem20/yil01/ss301.pdf
TBMM. 1998. "TBMM Göç Araştırma Raporu". Ankara.
TBMM. 2012. "TBMM Darbe ve Muhtıraları Araştırma Komisyonu Raporu". https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/arastirma_komisyonlari/darbe_muhtira/
TİHV. 1992b. *Örneklerle Türkiye İnsan Hakları Raporu 1991*. Ankara: Türkiye İnsan Hakları Vakfı.
TİHV. 1994. *Türkiye İnsan Hakları Raporu 1993*. Ankara: Türkiye İnsan Hakları Vakfı.
TİHV. 2016. *Curfews Between 16 August, 2015 – 16 August, 2016 and Civilians Who Lost Their Lives*. Ankara: Türkiye İnsan Hakları Vakfı. http://en.tihv.org.tr/curfews-between-august-16-2015-august-16-2016-and-civilians-who-lost-their-lives/
TMBB. 1995. *Ülkemizin Çeşitli Yörelerinde İşlenmiş Faili Meçhul Siyasal Cinayetler Konusunda Meclis Araştırma Komisyonu*. Ankara: TBMM.
Tunçay, M., 2021. "Kemalism". In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Islamic World*. http://oxfordislamicstudies.com/print/opr/t236/e0440
Ülke, Ö. 1994. "Özel Time 'Bozkurt' Referansı. Eylül".
Üngör, U.Ü. 2020. *Paramilitarism: Mass Violence in the Shadow of the State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
UNHCHR. 2017. "Report on the Human Rights Situation in South-East Turkey: July 2015 to December 2016". United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. https://www.ohchr.org/documents/countries/tr/ohchr_south-east_turkeyreport_10march2017.pdf
Warren, K.B. 2000. "Death Squads and Wider Complicities: Dilemmas for the Anthropology of Violence". In *Death Squad: The Anthropology of State Terror*, ed. J.A. Sluka. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Yalçın, N. 1988. "Sivil Orduya Asker Komutan". *Milliyet Gazetesi*. 11May.

Yıldıral, E. 2015. "Esedullah Timi ile İlgili Vahim İddialar: Ankara'ya Bağlılar". *Birgun*. 17November.https://www.birgun.net/haber/esedullah-timi-ile-ilgili-vahim-iddialar-ankara-ya-baglilar-95315

Yıldız, K. 2002. *Ülke İçinde Göç Ettirilen İnsanlar: Türkiye'de Kürtler*.ed.. E. Soğancı.London: KHRP. file:///Users/ayhanisik/Downloads/ulkeincinde.pdf

Yılmaz, A. 2015. *Karanlık Vardiya 90'lı Yılların Politik Arşivi*. 1st. ed.. Istanbul:Doğan Kitap.

Yurteri, K. 1994. "Polis Olmak İsteyen MHP'ye Başvuruyor". *Cumhuriyet Gazetesi*. 21September.